



West Highland College, University of the Highlands, and Islands

# Tertiary Learner Support Policy

## POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Head of Student Support
Responsible Office/ Department:	Student Services
Responsible Committee:	Finance and General Purpose
Review Officer (Post):	Student and Customer Service Manager
Date policy approved:	12/05/2021
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	03/10/2018
Date policy due for review:	12/05/2024
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	31/03/2021
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

This policy covers the period (date) to (date).

For all our up-to-date policies, please visit our [website](#).

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request.

## Policy Summary

Overview	This policy is required to set out a regional approach to learner support for West Highland College and all academic partners in the University of the Highlands and Islands.
Purpose	The policy will provide a framework for a consistent and coherent methodology for the support of learners.
Scope	This policy applies to all academic partners.
Consultation	This policy was developed by a Policy Ownership Group, made up of practitioners from across the University of the Highlands and Islands network. Endorsement was received from Senior Management Curriculum Team, Partnership Council and Further Educational Regional Board before the policy went through local consultation and approval by Boards of Management and UHI Academic Council.
Implementation and Monitoring	Academic partners will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy.
Risk Implications	The policy reduces risk for the University and academic partners by reinforcing the existing community of practice for staff and creating a streamlined process.  Students will also benefit from a consistent approach across all partners.
Link with Strategy	This policy is linked to individual Access and Inclusion strategies and the Regional Outcome Agreement.
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: Assessed – No further action to be taken.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 West Highland College, UHI is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment in which every student can make the most of learning and development opportunities available throughout their student journey. All students have different learning needs, regardless of level of study.
- 1.2 West Highland College, UHI will comply with the Equality Act 2010, and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and fair treatment for those with protected characteristics.
- 1.3 Students will be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential through anticipation of service provision, ensuring reasonable adjustments will be made when and where required by West Highland College, UHI

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Personal Learning Support Plan:** A Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) is a functional and confidential document which details the nature of a student's additional support need(s) and any support measures that have been agreed. PLSPs are drawn up in close consultation with students and are organic documents subject to change as appropriate.
- 2.2 **Reasonable adjustment duty:** As set out in the Equality Act 2010, the reasonable adjustment duty is the legal obligation to remove as far as possible by reasonable means the disadvantage which a disabled student experiences because of their disability. Further information from the Equality and Human Rights Commission is available [here](#).

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to create a supportive environment for learners in West Highland College, UHI. This policy is intended to promote access and inclusion and wherever possible to provide parity of experience for learners at each stage of their student journey.
- 3.2 Disclosures can be made at any time from pre-application. All students and prospective students are encouraged to disclose any specific requirements at the earliest opportunity, in order that appropriate support can be identified as soon as is practicable. Academic staff may also refer students to Learner support team.
- 3.3 As appropriate disclosures will be followed up by Learner support team at West Highland College, UHI. The professional judgement of the learner support team will be used at all stages of assessment to ascertain the appropriateness of support and adjustments for students.
- 3.4 **PLSPs:** The University of the Highlands and Islands partnership recognises the value of the PLSP as a functional and confidential document that details the support and adjustments, including those related to academic assessment, that have been approved in light of a student's specific needs. PLSPs should be used where appropriate, where it supports the learner, and the situation warrants and/or necessitates the use of this tool.
- 3.5 **Alternative Assessment Arrangements:** In order to develop Alternative Assessment Arrangements within a PLSP it is often required to generate evidence to do so. This evidence can take a variety of forms and may be dependent on the accreditation body stipulations.

- 3.6 Planning for reasonable adjustments will be undertaken collaboratively between the student, support, and academic staff. The student will always be regarded and treated as a central figure in this process and will be kept apprised of progress.
- 3.7 **Awarding Bodies:** When reviewing additional support requests validated by another awarding body, the awarding body website and/or policies must be referred to.
- 3.8 **Use of Personal Data:** Personal data collected through the West Highland College, UHI Learner Support process will be handled in accordance with the University's tertiary student document retention policy and the [relevant privacy notice](#). Personal data will be anonymised and used for statistical purposes to monitor applications by age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity status, ethnicity, religion and/or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or care experience.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to students undertaking courses at West Highland College, UHI, regardless of mode or level of delivery.
- 4.2 Support and/or adjustments are recommended on the basis of professional judgement by Learner Support team.
- 4.3 Whether it is reasonable for an education provider to make any particular adjustment will depend on a number of factors, including:
- The effectiveness of making the adjustment
  - Whether it is practical to make the adjustment
  - The cost of the adjustment, and the resources and size of the institution
  - The availability of grants, loans and other assistance to disabled students, such as Disabled Student Allowance, or charitable trusts
  - The extent to which aids, and services will be provided to disabled students from other sources
  - Health and Safety requirements: this means if the adjustment increased the risks to the health and safety of another person
  - The relevant interests of other people: this means where the adjustment results in significant disadvantage for other people

## 5. Exceptions

- 5.1 Student personal health care is out with the scope of this policy.

## 6. Notification

- 6.1 All staff are responsible for supporting learners through their student journey and should be aware of the policy.
- 6.2 Staff members responsible for providing specialist learner support will be briefed and trained on the policy and procedures.
- 6.3 The policy will be publicly available on West Highland College UHI's website, along with other current policies.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 West Highland College UHI has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 7.2 All staff have a responsibility to provide support for the learner through their student journey.
- 7.3 West Highland College UHI Student Support staff will provide services including, but not limited to:
- Contact with students and assessment of need
  - Creation of PLSPs
  - Signposting and coordinating support
  - Liaising between student and academic staff
  - Implementation of support
  - Passing Summary of Support to appropriate nominated curriculum staff
- 7.4 West Highland College UHI's Academic Staff will provide services including, but not limited to:
- Reading the Summary of Support and appropriate cascading to relevant members of staff on a need-to-know basis
  - Compliance with Summary of Support
  - Implementing learning and teaching adjustments
  - Review and liaison with Learner Support on impact of learning and teaching adjustments
  - Liaising with Learner Support where a student has not made a disclosure but may require support
  - Adhering to confidentiality protocols

## 8. Legislative Framework

- [Adult with Incapacity \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#)
- [Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [British Sign Language \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)
- [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 2005](#)
- [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Mental Health Act 2007](#)
- [Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#)
- [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Scottish Strategy for Autism 2011](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#)
- [Scottish Care Leavers Covenant \(2015\)](#)

## 9. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- [British Sign Language \(BSL\): National Plan 2017 to 2023](#)

- [WHC UHI Assessment Policy](#)
- [WHC UHI Admissions Policy](#)
- [WHC Corporate Parenting Plan Report](#)
- [Disability Processes Privacy Notice](#)
- [WHC UHI Further Education Guidance Policy](#)
- [WHC UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy](#)
- [UHI Equality and Diversity Reporting](#)
- [UHI Fitness to Study Guidelines](#)
- [UHI Recording of Taught Sessions Policy](#)
- [UHI Tertiary Learner Support Procedures](#)

## 10. Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Endorsed by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	Spring 2018	Partnership Council	New Single Policy	Learner Support Policy Ownership Group
1	March 2021	Partnership Council	Formatting changes and grammar corrections; 2: Section on Access and Inclusion Strategies removed; 2.1: Additional information added at end of section; 3.2: Revised section containing former sections 3.2 and 3.3; 3.3: Changed 'where' to 'as'; 3.4: Clarity around reasonable adjustments being made where appropriate; 3.5: new extended section on alternative assessment arrangements, removing last sentence from PLSP section; 3.7: Example removed from section as too many awarding bodies to use single example; 4.2: New section on professional judgement of staff; 4.3: Revision made to second bullet point regarding finances and resources'; 9: Updated list to relevant resources.	Learner Support Policy Ownership Group
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